

# APOORVA SHIVARAM

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Cognitive developmental psychologist and PhD candidate with 7+ years of experience in mixed-methods research and data science. Determined to create better user experiences for people all over the world.

## EDUCATION

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

**PhD in Psychology**

Expected 12/2023

**MSc in Statistics**

Expected 12/2023

**MSc in Psychology**

09/2020

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

**MA in Social Sciences**

08/2017

Christ University, Bangalore, India

**BA in Psychology Honors**

05/2015

## RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE

**Learning Analyst Intern, Newsela**

06/2023 – Present

- Provided **usage recommendations** by leveraging **statistical and data visualization** expertise in **R Programming**, analyzed user behavior from **large and complex datasets**
- **Communicate findings** from analyses through **presentations and reports** to internal stakeholders, impacting **Product, Content, and Business improvements**
- **Utilized SQL** to proficiently query project data, enabling comprehensive analysis of user behavior patterns and insights

**Design Researcher, Onda Collective**

05/2023 – Present

- **Collaborates with a cross-functional team** consisting of **designers and product managers** to develop an intervention to motivate health behavior change using **design thinking techniques**
- Conducted an **in-depth literature review to inform the hypothesis generation** and decision-making process, created presentations to **communicate findings** to external stakeholders
- **Co-facilitated over 10 interviews** with relevant experts and participants to understand and **gain insights** about the community and their experiences

**Research Consultant Intern, LXD Research and Consulting**

01/2023 – 05/2023

- Consulted on projects from 3+ educational technology companies to **evaluate and strengthen their learning programs** and tools in collaboration with other researchers
- Gained **insights into user experience** using **surveys, interviews, and focus groups** and **recommended concrete product design changes** to clients from educational technology firms
- Utilize **qualitative methods**, produced reports (3) and academic manuscripts (1), and communicate main findings to a range of clients and stakeholders in a clear and concise manner

**Graduate Researcher, Infant Cognition Lab, Northwestern University**

09/2018 – Present

- Conduct research with 2600+ participants in laboratory and naturalistic settings using **usability testing** and **quantitative methods**
- Spearhead 15+ research projects end-to-end, leading **research design, data collection, statistical analysis and visualizations, and publication** (6)
- **Mentored and trained** over 30 research assistants across 5+ years on coding, research methodologies, and grant writing

**Lab Manager, Learning Lab, The University of Chicago**

08/2017 – 07/2018

- Developed and designed experimental, cross-cultural, and large-scale school studies
- Oversaw and collected data from middle-school students from 10+ schools in a 6-month period from China and the US
- Trained 5 research assistants on experimental procedures and coding schemes for laboratory and school studies

## PUBLICATIONS

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- Shivaram, A.**, Shao, R., Simms, N., Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2023). When do Children Pass the Relational-Match-To-Sample Task?. In *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 45, No. 45).
- Anderson, E. M., **Shivaram, A.**, Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2023). The Less is More Paradox in Relational Learning. In *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 45, No. 45).
- Schechter, R., Chase, P., **Shivaram, A.** & Staeps, M. (2023). Virtual Lab Implementation Model Predicts STEM Future Plans: Insights from Contemporary Science Courses in Higher Education. In T. Bastiaens (Ed.), *Proceedings of EdMedia + Innovate Learning* (pp. 1235-1242). Vienna, Austria: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).
- Hespos, S. & **Shivaram, A.** (2022) Artificial Intelligence: Can a computer think like a baby? *Nature Human Behavior*, 1-1.
- Shivaram, A.**, Chavez, Y., Anderson, E., Fritz, A., Jackson, R., Edwards, L. Powers, S., Libertus, M., & Hespos, S. J. (2021). Brief interventions influence the quantity and quality of caregiver-child conversations in an everyday context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 2228.
- Hespos, S., Gentner, D., Anderson, E., & **Shivaram, A.** (2021). The origins of same/different discrimination in human infants. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 37, 69-74.
- Murphy, A. N., Zheng, Y., **Shivaram, A.**, Vollman, E., & Richland, L. E. (2021). Bias and sensitivity to task constraints in spontaneous relational attention. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 202, 104981.

## INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

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- Development of relational reasoning: When do children pass the RMTS task?* (March, 2023). Cognitive Science Early Career Colloquium Series, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD.
- Alignment and complexity: Two factors that influence children's relational reasoning.* (January, 2023). Cognitive Area brownbag, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
- So you want to communicate your research.* (February, 2022). ARES Workshop Series, Department of Psychology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
- Continuity or Curvilinear: The trajectory of children's relational learning.* (December, 2021). Developmental Area brownbag, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL. Virtual talk.
- Spot the relation: Factors that influence children's relational learning.* (November, 2021). Cognitive Area brownbag, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL .
- Meet the Greebles: Progressively aligning multiple exemplars in infancy.* (May, 2021). Cognitive Area brownbag, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. Virtual talk.
- Can you find it?: Integration of thought and action on a search task.* (March, 2020). Cognitive Area brownbag, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
- Why are we so smart? The origins of abstract thought.* (August, 2019). Seven Minutes of Scholarship symposium, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL.
- Mangelsdorf, H. H. & Shivaram, A. (2018). *Metaphoric iconicity of gestures in classical Indian dance.* Invited talk at the University of Chicago Center in Delhi, India.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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**Shivaram, A.,** & Zissimopolous, A. (2023). *A 10-week training program enhances research communication skills*. Poster presented at The Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition Biennial Meeting, Nagoya, Japan.

Anderson, E., **Shivaram, A.,** Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2023). *The less is more paradox in relational learning*. Talk presented at The Cognitive Science Society Annual Conference, Sydney, Australia.

**Shivaram, A.,** Shao, R., Simms, N., Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2023). *When do children pass the Relational Match-to-Sample task?* Poster presented at The Cognitive Science Society Annual Conference, Sydney, Australia.

**Shivaram, A.,** Youkhanna, M., & Hespos, S. (2023). *Mixed results testing categorization in infants using a preferential-looking paradigm on Zoom*. Poster presented at The Cognitive Science Society Annual Conference, Sydney, Australia.

**Shivaram, A.,** Youkhanna, M., van Heugten, M., & Hespos, S. (2022). *The link between language and cognition in infancy*. Talk presented at The Cognitive Science Society Annual Conference, Toronto, CA.

**Shivaram, A.,** Brundige, E., Guy, L., Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2022). *Tracing the developmental trajectory of children's relational learning*. Talk presented at The Cognitive Science Society Annual Conference, Toronto, CA.

**Shivaram, A.,** Brundige, E., Guy, L., Hespos, S., & Gentner, D. (2022). *Examining the developmental trajectory of relational learning in early childhood*. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Bi-Enial Conference, Madison, WI.

**Shivaram, A.,** Chavez, Y., Anderson, E., Fritz, A., Jackson, R, Edwards, L. Powers, S., Libertus, M., & Hespos, S. J. (2022). *Brief interventions influence the quantity and quality of caregiver-child conversations in an everyday context*. Symposium talk presented at SRCD Special Topics Meeting: Learning through Play and Imagination, St. Louis, MO.

**Shivaram, A.,** Youkhanna, M., & Hespos, S. (2021). *Can infant looking paradigms transfer to a Zoom platform?* Symposium talk presented at the Asia-Pacific Babylab Constellation (ABC), Hybrid Meeting.

**Shivaram, A.,** & Dworak, E. (2021). *Modeling student math achievement across countries using TIMSS 2015 and 2019*. Poster presented at Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS), Virtual Meeting.

**Shivaram, A.,** Anderson, E., Hespos, S. J., & Gentner, D. (2021). *Progressively Aligning Multiple Exemplars in Infancy*.\* Poster presented at SRCD 2021: Virtual Biennial Meeting.

\*(Nominated for the SRCD Student and Early Career Council Poster Competition)

**Shivaram, A.,** Anderson, E., Hespos, S. J., & Gentner, D. (2021). *When Does one Exemplar Behave Like Many?* Poster presented at SRCD 2021: Virtual Biennial Meeting.

Moore, J. & **Shivaram, A.** (2020). *Exploring Identity: New International Graduate Students Negotiating Race/Place in the US*. Talk presented at the 2020 Symposium on World Languages Education.

Murphy, A., Zheng, Y., **Shivaram, A.,** Teska, L., & Richland, L. E. (2019). *Influence of culture and priming on analogical reasoning performance across development*. Poster presented at The Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Louisville, KY.

Zheng, Y., **Shivaram, A.,** & Richland, L. E. (2017). *The trade-offs of gesture on analogical reasoning and memory for relations*. Poster presented at The Cognitive Development Society Bi-Enial Conference, Portland, OR.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Northwestern University

Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology

Cognitive Development [F2F]	Spring 2022
Cognitive Psychology [F2F]	Winter 2022
Research Methods [F2F]	Fall 2021
Developmental Psychology (with a discussion section) [Hybrid]	Spring 2021
Cognitive Psychology [Online]	Winter 2021
Developmental Psychology (with two discussion sections) [Online]	Spring 2020
Special Topics in Cognition: Infant Cognition [F2F]	Winter 2020
Statistical Methods in Psychology [F2F]	Spring 2019
Introduction to Psychology [F2F]	Winter 2019

Teaching Assistant, Master's in Health Communication

Social Contexts of Illness [F2F]	Summer 2022
Changing Health Behaviors [F2F]	Spring 2022

### The University of Chicago

Course Assistant, Perspectives in Social Science Analysis [F2F]	Fall 2017
Tutor, Neighborhood Schools Program	2017

### AIIESEC International Internship Initiative

Educational Instructor [F2F]	Summer 2013
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## INSTITUTIONAL AND DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

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### Northwestern University

Institutional Service

Graduate Assistant, Research Communication Training Program	2021-2023
Panel Member, The Graduate School's New Student Orientation	2022
Graduate Writing Fellow, The Writing Place	2021-2022
Graduate Assistant, Teaching and Learning Technologies	2021-2022
Online Peer Mentor Team Lead, English Language Programs	Summer 2020 & 2021
Mentor, Graduates Mentoring Undergraduates	2020-2021
Treasurer, Graduate Student Association	2019-2021
Online Peer Mentor for International Students, English Language Programs	2019

Departmental Service

Lead Organizer, Cognitive Area External Speaker Series (DEI)	2020-Present
Graduate Student Mentor, Department of Psychology	2021-Present
Panel Member, Department of Psychology	2022
Organizing Committee, Department of Psychology's Sneak Peek Program	2021

### The University of Chicago

Institutional Service

International Students Mentor, MA Program in Social Sciences	2017-2018
Graduate Council Finance Committee	2016-2017

## SCHOLARSHIP & AWARDS

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### Northwestern University

Graduate Tuition Fellowship and Stipend	2019-2024
MARCS International Visiting Scholar Program, Western Sydney University	2023
Conference Travel Award, Northwestern Buffett Institute (\$1,000)	2023
Graduate Conference Travel Grant, The Graduate School (\$800)	2023
Conference Travel Award, Department of Psychology (\$450)	2023
Graduate Conference Travel Grant, The Graduate School (\$800)	2022
Conference Travel Award, Department of Psychology (\$450)	2022
Cognitive Science Travel Grant, Department of Cognitive Science (\$300)	2022
Graduate Writing Fellowship (\$3000)	2021-2022
Cognitive Science First-Year Fellowship	2018-2019

### The University of Chicago

Social Sciences Scholarship (\$26,856)	2016-2017
Dean's Scholarship (\$5,250)	2016-2017
J.N. Tata Endowment, India (600,000 INR)	2016-2017
J.N. Tata Travel Scholarship, India (50,000 INR)	2016-2017

## SKILLS & TOOLS

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*Technical skills:* Quantitative and qualitative research methods, experimental design, data collection, interviews, focus groups, ethnographies, statistical analysis (regression modeling, ANOVA, t-tests), survey sampling and design

*Project management skills:* Strong oral/written communication, independent and teamwork, analytical and problem solving, leadership and team management skills

*Tools:* R, SQL, SPSS, STATA, Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, Tableau, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator

## REFERENCES

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### Dr. Susan Hespos

Professor  
Department of Psychology  
Northwestern University  
&  
Professor of Infant Studies,  
Western Sydney University  
[hespos@northwestern.edu](mailto:hespos@northwestern.edu)

### Dr. Dedre Gentner

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Department of Psychology  
Northwestern University  
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### Dr. Lindsey Richland

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of the Graduate Program  
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